

Remarks

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in view of the above amendments and in light of the following remarks and discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 2, 4-7, 18, and 21-29 are currently pending in the application; Claims 1, 3, 8-17, 19, and 20 having been canceled, Claims 2, 4, 5, 18, and 21 having been amended, and new dependent Claims 22-29 having been added, by way of the present response.

Applicants express thanks for the Examiner's indication that Claims 4-7, although objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. In response, Applicants have so-rewritten Claim 4. Further, dependent Claims 5-7 depend from newly independent Claim 4. Applicants have also amended Claims 4 and 5 to obviate informalities, and to overcome an objection under 37 C.F.R. § 1.75(i), as discussed below. Thus, Applicants respectfully request the allowance of Claims 4-7.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-7, 17, 18, and 21 were objected to under 37 C.F.R. § 1.75(i). In response, Applicants have amended the claims to include line indentations indicating elements or steps and transitional phrases, as appropriate. Thus, Applicants respectfully request that the objection to remaining Claims 2, 4-7, 18, and 21 be withdrawn.

In the Office Action, Claims 1-3, 17, 18, and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6-263280 to Kawano. Applicants respectfully assert that the rejection has been overcome for the following reasons.

As stated above, Claims 2, 18, and 21 have been amended, and new dependent Claims 22-29 have been added. Applicants respectfully assert that support for the changes to the claims is self-evident from the originally filed disclosure, including the

original claims, and that therefore no new matter has been added.

The present invention is directed to sheet feeding apparatuses, image forming apparatuses including sheet feeding apparatuses, and sheet feeding methods. Independent Claims 2 and 18 each recite at least one driven gear disposed on a cantilever shaft, the at least one driven gear having a predetermined number of teeth. At least one driving gear is adapted to engage and to drive the at least one driven gear, the at least one driving gear having a predetermined number of teeth that is greater than the predetermined number of teeth of the at least one driven gear. A reverse roller is pressed into contact with a feed roller, the reverse roller supported on an end of the cantilever shaft. Independent Claim 21 recites feeding sheet media between a feed roller and a reverse roller pressed into contact with the feed roller, the reverse roller adapted to be rotated by a driven gear and to separate and convey the sheet media held between the feed roller and the reverse roller, and engaging the driven gear with a driving gear, the driving gear having a predetermined number of teeth that is greater than a predetermined number of teeth of the driven gear.

Kawano, is directed to a sheet carrying device. As shown in Figures 1a and 1b, for example, of Kawano, a driven gear 8 of a reverse roller shaft 4 is arranged so as to move slidably freely as well as to rotate integrally with the reverse roller shaft 4. A gear guiding and fixing member 40 is arranged to change a position of the driven gear 8.

However, Applicants respectfully assert that Kawano does not teach the claimed features of a driving gear having a predetermined number of teeth that is greater than a predetermined number of teeth of a driven gear. In particular, Kawano does not state a difference in a number of teeth between the driven gear 8 and the driving gear 7.

Independent Claims 2 and 18 each recite “ the at least one driven gear having a

predetermined number of teeth . . . [and] the at least one driving gear having a predetermined number of teeth that is greater than the predetermined number of teeth of the at least one driven gear.” Independent Claim 21 recites “the driving gear having a predetermined number of teeth that is greater than a predetermined number of teeth of the driven gear.” Thus, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of independent Claims 2, 18, and 21 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) be withdrawn and the independent claims allowed.

New dependent Claims 22-29 depend from independent Claims 2 and 18, and are therefore also allowable for at least the same reasons as the independent claims, as well as for their own features. Thus, Applicants respectfully request that dependent Claims 22-29 be allowed.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal Allowance. A Notice of Allowance for Claims 2, 4-7, 18, and 21-29 is earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place this application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned representative at the below listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. J. Maier', written in a cursive style.

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